
Education Committee

ESSB 5497

Brief Description: Authorizing a statewide program for comprehensive dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Holmquist, Rasmussen, Oemig, Pridemore, Zarelli, Weinstein, Eide, Hobbs, Keiser, Fraser, Hewitt, Tom, Kauffman, Clements, Hargrove, Kilmer, Franklin, Kohl-Welles and Shin; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Directs the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to create, administer, and monitor a grant program for local partnerships of schools, families, and communities, known as "building bridges programs," to address dropout prevention, intervention, and retrieval.
- Directs Educational Service Districts and Workforce Development Councils to provide training and assistance to grant recipients.
- Directs the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a state-level work group to make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the grant programs.

Hearing Date: 3/15/07

Staff: Andrew Colvin (786-7304).

Background:

School districts are required to report to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction on an annual basis regarding student graduation rates, dropout rates, and related data. For the 2004-05 school year, just over five percent of students enrolled in grades 9 through 12, or just under 16,000, dropped out of school. Approximately 74 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 graduated on time.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2006 the Washington Learns committee, chaired by Governor Gregoire, issued final recommendations. As part of a number of comprehensive strategies, the committee recommended the establishment of a grant program for school district and community partnerships to prevent students from dropping out of school.

Summary of Bill:

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is directed to create a grant for local partnerships, referred to as "building bridges programs." These partnerships will involve schools, families, and communities, and will identify students at risk of dropping out, provide those students with assistance and support, and help with retrieval and reentry to school for those students who have dropped out.

Every partnership must include at least one school district, and shall be lead by one of a number of specified entities. In order to be eligible for a grant, applicants must satisfy five specific criteria:

- build or demonstrate a commitment to building a partnership that includes a variety of specified members;
- demonstrate how the grant will enhance any existing dropout prevention and intervention programs in the district;
- provide a 25 percent match from within the partnership, including in-kind contributions;
- track and report data as required by the grant; and
- describe how the program will be sustained beyond initial funding, and the roles of each of the partners.

In consultation with the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, the OSPI will develop criteria for the grants and evaluate proposals for funding. In addition, the OSPI will undertake a variety of specified oversight and support functions with respect to the grant program and grant recipients.

To support the building bridges programs, Educational Service Districts and Workforce Development Councils shall provide them with training and assistance in specified areas.

The OSPI will establish a state-level work group comprised of various specified state agencies that work with at risk youth or youth who have dropped out of school. The purpose of the work group will be to make recommendations to the Legislature, develop and track performance measures for the partnerships around the state, and identify research-based and emerging best practices for prevention, intervention, and retrieval programs. Beginning December 1, 2007, the work group will report to the Legislature and the Governor annually with recommendations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 12, 2007.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.